GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2250
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2007
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER S VISIT TO SRI LANKA
Mandal Shri Sanat Kumar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the External Affairs Minister had visited Sri Lanka recently to hold talks on the progress of the peace process in Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the talks are likely to be useful in strengthening the peace process in Sri Lanka?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) Minister of External Affairs visited Sri Lanka on January 9-10, 2007 to extend an invitation from our Prime Minister to Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse for the 14th SAARC Summit to be held in New Delhi in April 2007. During meetings with the Sri Lankan leadership, bilateral relations, the peace process in Sri Lanka and SAARC issues were discussed.

(b) & (c) Both sides reiterated the high priority that they attach to expansion of bilateral cooperation in all spheres. While reaffirming India's commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, Government of India have emphasised to the Government of Sri Lanka that the only solution to the ethnic problem is a negotiated, political settlement that is acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka and stressed the need to make all possible efforts to revive the political dialogue in order to move the peace process forward.